

Madam Speaker, nearly two decades after the breakup of the U.S.S.R., Soviet-era censorship survives in places like Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, which, not coincidentally, ban all political opposition.

THE U.S.-CHINA COMPETITIVENESS
AGENDA OF 2009

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 7, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to join my good friend, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN), in unveiling the bipartisan U.S.-China Competitiveness Agenda of 2009. This agenda includes four legislative priorities to expand America's influence in China and increase American competitiveness in the global marketplace.

As co-chairs of the bipartisan House U.S.-China Working Group, we are working in Congress to elevate the sophistication of our debate on U.S.-China issues. The U.S.-China Competitiveness Agenda provides Congress with a constructive legislative package to expand U.S. engagement with China while supporting key domestic and foreign policy objectives.

Along with two other Working Group members, Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS (D-Calif.) and Congressman STEVE ISRAEL (D-N.Y.), we are introducing bipartisan legislation to expand America's diplomatic infrastructure in China, boost support to small- and medium-sized businesses exporting to the China market, increase funds for domestic Chinese language instruction and build new cooperative energy ties between the U.S. and China.

The U.S. has one embassy and five consulates in China, leaving more than 200 cities with a population greater than one million people with little to no American representation. Additionally, while 60 percent of U.S. exports go to the Asia-Pacific market, the U.S. contributes 100 times more dollars to Europe's Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development than to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum.

My legislation, the U.S.-China Diplomatic Expansion Act of 2009, authorizes the construction of a new consulate in Fuzhou and 10 smaller diplomatic posts in cities with more than a million people. The bill triples funding for public diplomacy, boosts funding for a range of language, student and teacher exchange programs, increases funding for rule of law initiatives and more than triples the U.S. contribution to Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.

If we are serious about expanding export promotion services, defending intellectual property rights, improving consumer product safety and enhancing economic competitiveness, we need a diplomatic infrastructure in China that reflects those priorities.

I am proud to co-sponsor three other bipartisan bills in the U.S.-China Competitiveness Agenda, including Mr. LARSEN's U.S.-China Market Engagement and Export Promotion Act of 2009, Ms. DAVIS's U.S.-Chinese Language Engagement Act of 2009 and Mr. ISRAEL's U.S.-China Energy Cooperation Act of 2009.

Mr. LARSEN's bill would help states establish export promotion offices in China and create a

new China Market Advocate program at U.S. Export Assistance Centers around the nation. The bill provides assistance to small businesses for China trade missions and authorizes grants for Chinese business education programs.

I strongly support the U.S.-China Market Engagement and Export Promotion Act because we need innovative programs that support our small business exports and arm them with the tools they need to succeed in China.

Roughly 200 million students are learning English in China today. By contrast, only about 50,000 primary and secondary school students study Chinese in America. Ms. DAVIS's bill increases Chinese cultural studies and language acquisition for elementary, high school and college-age students. Grants would be available to fund university joint venture programs, virtual cultural exchanges with Chinese schools and intensive summer language instruction programs.

We have more than just a trade deficit with China—we also have a knowledge deficit. That is why I strongly support the U.S.-Chinese Language Engagement Act. We need additional funding for domestic Chinese language programs, educational exchanges and Chinese teacher exchanges to fix this knowledge imbalance.

To create green jobs in America and fight global climate change, we must expand energy cooperation between the U.S. and China. Mr. ISRAEL's bill authorizes new grants to fund U.S.-China energy and climate change education programs, along with joint research and development of carbon capture, sequestration technology, improved energy efficiency, and renewable energy sources.

In my view, China's connections to unstable energy markets like Iran, Sudan and Venezuela could set a foreign policy collision course with the United States. I strongly support the U.S.-China Energy Cooperation Act. To protect our environment and avoid future conflict, we need creative programs to boost U.S.-China energy cooperation.

I want to thank my colleagues for their hard work on this bipartisan agenda. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor all four bills and move quickly to enact this legislation into law.

INTRODUCTION OF U.S.-CHINA
LANGUAGE ENGAGEMENT ACT
OF 2009

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 7, 2009

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the U.S.-China Language Engagement Act of 2009—a bill to close the knowledge deficit when it comes to our relationship with China.

It is little news to anyone that China is on the rise. With a population of over 1.3 billion people and the second largest economy in the world when measured by domestic purchasing power parity, China is poised to become a world power, economically, diplomatically, and militarily.

Yet at a time when China's influence on the world stage is increasing, our national understanding of the "Middle Kingdom" has not kept pace.

While an estimated 200 million Chinese school children are studying our language and culture, less than 50,000 American elementary and secondary students are studying Chinese.

The goal of the U.S.-China Language Engagement Act is to provide our schools with the resources they need to offer Chinese language instruction and cultural studies classes.

This important legislation would instruct the Department of Education to offer competitive grants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to develop and implement innovative Chinese language and cultural studies programs.

LEAs, in collaboration with institutions of higher education, may use grant funds to carry out intensive summer Chinese language instruction, link bilingual Chinese and English speakers with students and conduct virtual cultural exchanges with educational institutions in China.

This bill is part of a broader legislative package seeking to improve our competitive edge and relationship with China.

Some may view China's resurgence as a threat. But today, Madam Speaker, I ask you to turn China's rise into an opportunity for United States citizens.

Through careful diplomacy, I believe China can become not only a competitor but also a partner. But we cannot have this dialogue if we cannot understand the Chinese people.

This is why I come before you today: to ask for your help in ensuring that the lines of communication between the United States and China stay open. Please support the U.S.-China Language Engagement Act and help bridge the language barrier and cross the cultural gap between future generations of Americans and the Chinese.

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF
RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 627) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish fair and transparent practices relating to the extension of credit under an open end consumer credit plan, and for other purposes:

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 627, the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights, and would like to thank Financial Institutions Chairman LUIS GUTIERREZ and Congresswoman MALONEY for their continued dedication and leadership on this issue.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 627. Thanks to this legislation, abusive billing practices will end. No longer will a company be able to harm consumers by engaging in double-cycle billing. No longer will a company be able to harm consumers by applying their payments to the lowest-interest balance. No longer will these companies be able to harm consumers through arbitrary interest rate increases or universal default practices.

This bill also requires—as a result of an amendment I offered at markup—that the Federal Reserve conduct a study of how credit card companies are treating credit lines. Some

companies are reducing the credit lines of consumers based on information such as where they shop—including the type of store and the neighborhood in which it is located. I am also aware that some companies have reduced credit lines based on the identity of the consumer's mortgage lender. This type of behavior is tantamount to redlining.

I hope that the Federal Reserve study contained in this bill will provide the Congress with the information we need to reign in these abusive practices.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 627, the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights Act of 2009.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 7, 2009

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call special attention to an activity Americans engage in throughout every day—prayer. Today is the National Day of Prayer, an observation established by Congress and President Truman in 1952.

Our Nation was founded on Judeo-Christian principles, which continue to permeate our daily lives—and need to be preserved. In recent times, these principles and the demonstration of them has come under attack by certain segments of society. From the very beginning of our Nation's history, our Nation's leaders have relied heavily on their faith, a fact that led our Founders to include the constitutional right to freely exercise one's religion in the very beginning of our Bill of Rights. This right is every bit as fundamentally important—and deserving of protection—today as it was in the 18th century.

Since the first call to prayer in 1775, when the Continental Congress called on the colonies to pray for wisdom in forming the Nation, the leaders of our Nation have continued to pray for that wisdom to shape our Nation. We look to God to provide us with the direction to act in accordance with His will, on behalf of the Americans who have sent us here to represent them. The one thing we know for certain is that there's nothing we can't accomplish—here in Congress or anywhere in the world—with God's help and blessing.

HONORING ST. ROSE LADY WILDCATS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 7, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an exceptional group of young ladies from Clinton County, Illinois.

The St. Rose Lady Wildcats volleyball team captured the Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association Class S state tournament, defeating the squad from Lick Creek in straight sets. St. Rose swept through the tournament, not losing a single set on the way to the title. They knocked off Ewing in the opener and Centralia Trinity Lutheran in the second round, going on a 15–0 tear to come from behind and win game one.

I want to congratulate coaches Colette Huelsmann and Brian Holtgrave on leading this group of young ladies to this victory. Most of all, I want to congratulate the members of the state champion St. Rose Lady Wildcats: Abby Holtgrave, Amanda Gall, Brooke Buehne, Erika VonBokel, Lauren Willis, Ellie Detmer, Elizabeth Marcus, Lydia Rehkemper, Larissa Jacob, Maddie Timmermann, Avoyanna Kampwerth and Jamie Voss.

These young ladies have represented themselves, their school and their community in an exemplary fashion, and I congratulate them, and wish them all the best for continued success in the classroom and on the court.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF FATHER DAVID FRANCIS FALLON

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 7, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Father David Francis Fallon, founding Pastor of La Sagrada Familia Parish. His love, kindness and faithful service on behalf of the people of our community will always be remembered, especially in the hearts and memories of those whose lives he impacted the most—the poor and disenfranchised of our society.

Father Fallon was born and raised in Cleveland as the second oldest of thirteen children, where he learned at a young age the significance of family, faith, hard work and connection to community. Following his graduation from Borromeo College, then Saint Mary Seminary, Father Fallon was ordained into the priesthood on May 30, 1970. His first assignment was at Holy Family Parish and later as Associate Pastor at Saint John Bosco Parish. In 1975, Father Fallon was transferred to Saint Clement Parish in Lakewood. He served for two years before joining a mission team in El Salvador, where he brought faith, hope and a sense of security to his parish there.

Though not of Hispanic heritage, Father Fallon became fluent in its customs, language and culture, and he became warmly embraced as a true son of the people of Cleveland's Hispanic community. He celebrated Masses in Spanish, and began bilingual services for young churchgoers. Reflecting a generous heart, joy for life and humble demeanor, Father Fallon easily drew others to him and his leadership became a guiding light that brought people and organizations together. His diplomacy and commitment to community was evident in the 1998 merging of two Hispanic parishes, San Juan Bautista and Cristo Rey, to form La Sagrada Familia parish.

Under the direction of Father Fallon, La Sagrada Familia has risen as a foundation of strength, support and resources for people of all ethnic and religious backgrounds who seek guidance and support. Father Fallon initiated numerous programs, including a food pantry and clothing outlet where individuals and families in need can obtain free food, clothing and furniture. He organized church volunteers to serve the community in social service, employment and education.

Additionally, Father Fallon inspired others to empower themselves and take pride in their community. He was an active attendee and

member of various neighborhood, civic and municipal organizations, and he led numerous efforts in organizing voter registration drives in the Hispanic neighborhood.

Moreover, Father Fallon's commitment to ministering to those who suffered emotional or physical hardships never wavered. He never missed his weekly visits to those who were homebound or those living in the neighboring nursing home. He brought each person the sacrament of communion, a compassionate presence and kind and calming words, comfort, faith and hope to our most vulnerable citizens.

Madam Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Father David Francis Fallon, whose immeasurable service to others, compassion, faith, and a true belief in community has brought healing, hope and restored faith in all of us. I extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Father David Francis Fallon. Though he will be deeply missed by everyone who knew and loved him well, Father Fallon's compassionate service to others will continue to serve as an example and as a source of hope at La Sagrada Familia parish

MAI YANG

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 7, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Mai Yang who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Mai Yang is a senior at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Mai Yang is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Mai Yang for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication she has shown in her academic career to her future accomplishments.

MORTGAGE REFORM AND ANTI-PREDATORY LENDING ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1728) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to reform consumer mortgage practices and provide accountability for such practices, to provide certain minimum standards for consumer mortgage loans, and for other purposes:

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1728, the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act.